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SONIC THE FUGITIVE™

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

ENDGAME

PART 2 OF 4

Years ago, most of the young residents of **Planet Mobius** were forced into war, defending themselves against the conspiracy of **Julian**, former **Warlord** of the **Kingdom of Acorn**. Most notable of these "freedom fighters" is a team led by the King's own daughter, and championed by the swiftest hero in the land. While their past efforts have been valiant, they have been a far cry from the total defeat of the rechristened **Dr. Robotnik**.

When their former **sire** staged a miraculous return to health, fortune seemed to shine on our stalwart heroes. The glistening hope of more experienced **leadership** paved the way for potential salvation.

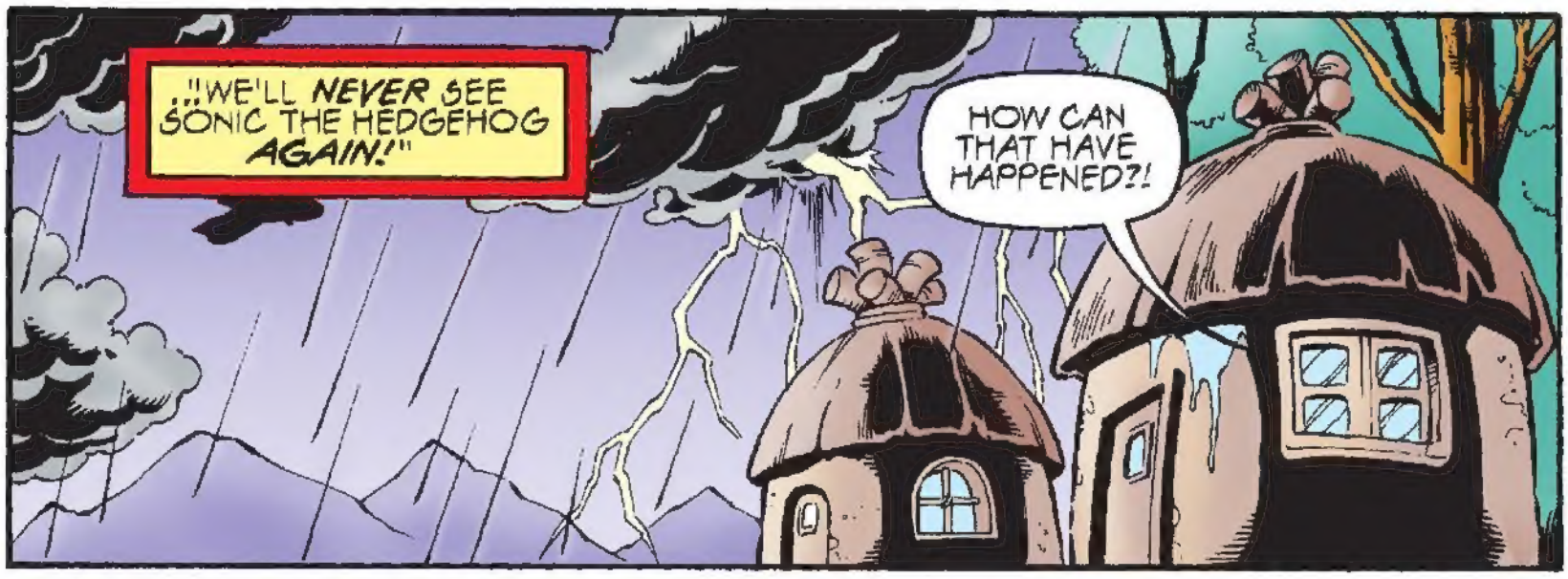
Alas, it was not to be...

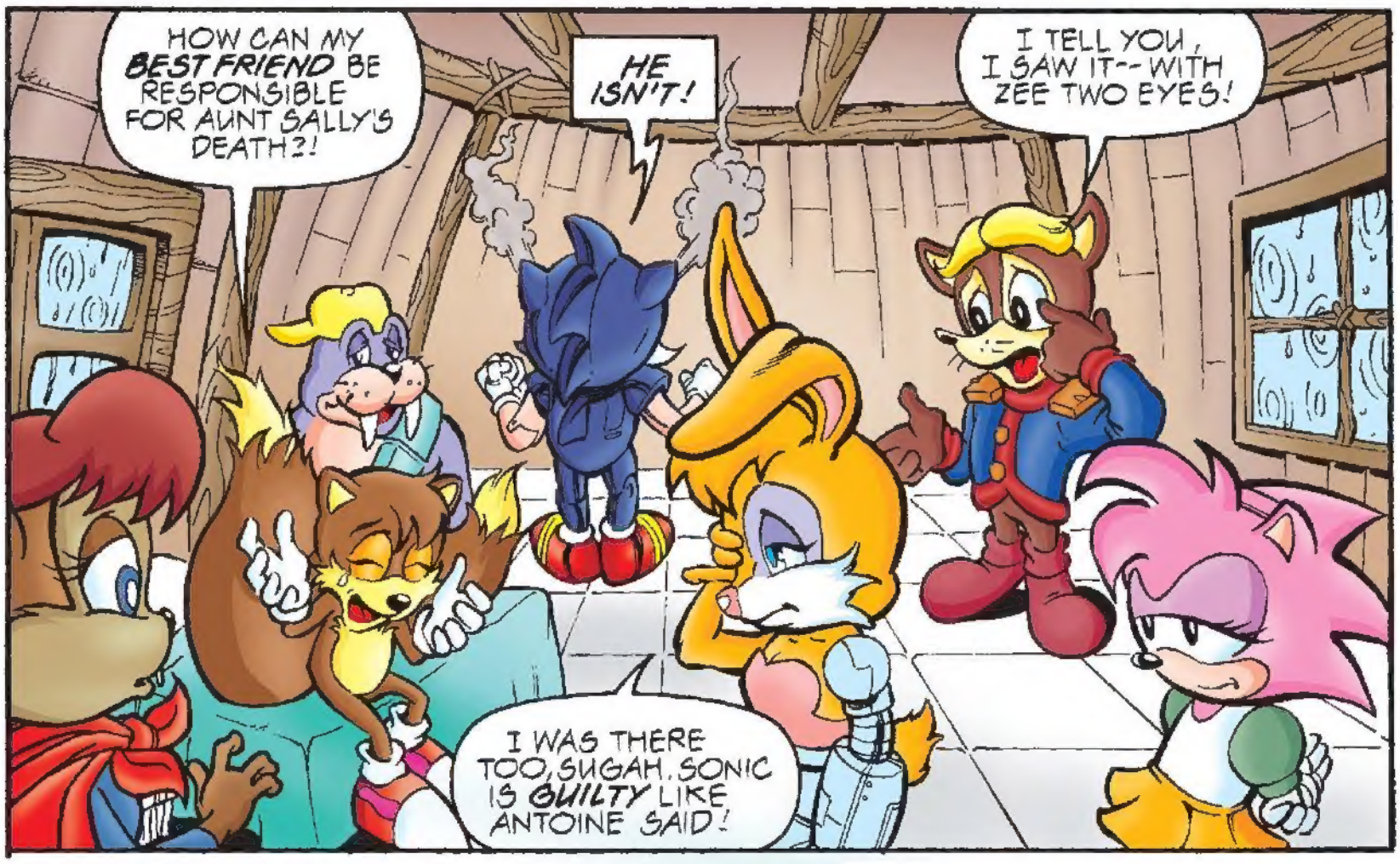
During their latest mission, **Princess Sally Acorn** met sudden tragedy. Returned to **Knothole Village**, she was pronounced DEAD. Almost as tragic was the revelation that she died at the hands of... **Sonic The Hedgehog** himself!

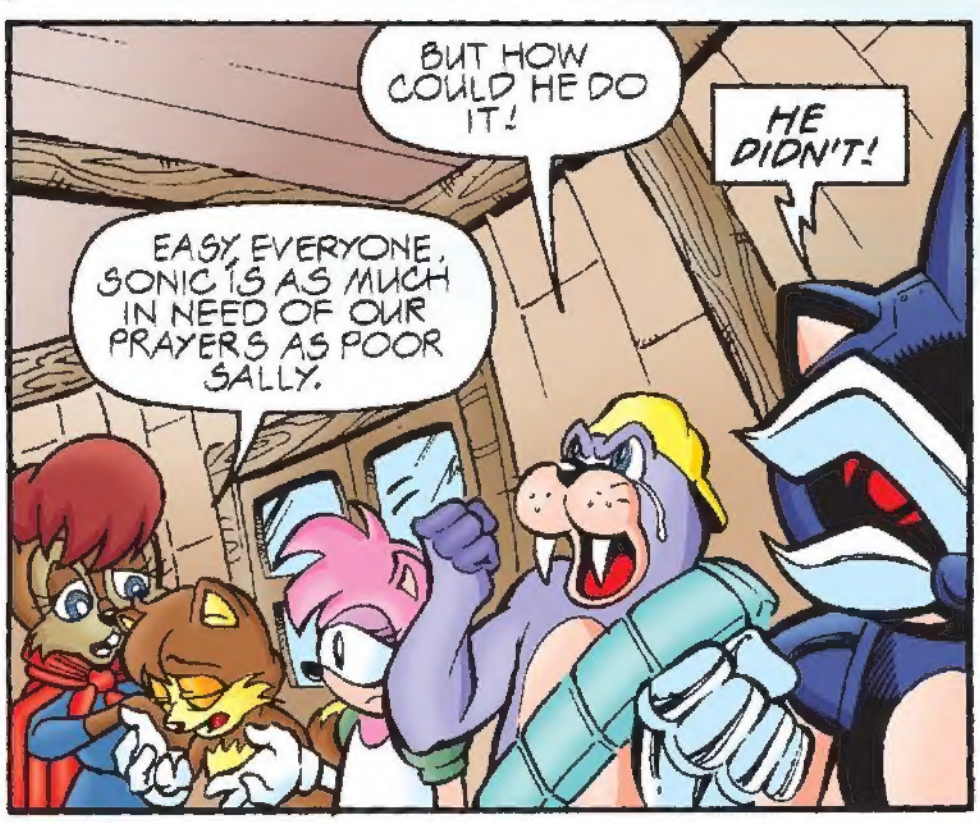
Pronouncing sentence, the King condemned the "former" hero to a life of imprisonment. While it is clear that treachery and deceit abound, it is equally unclear who **all** the conspirators are of this swift **injustice**. While it is certain that the dark forces of **Robotropolis** are preparing their next move, it is equally uncertain whether our heroes will rally, recreating the former glory of the once-gleaming city of **Mobotropolis**.

One thing cannot be disputed — no one will ever be the same...

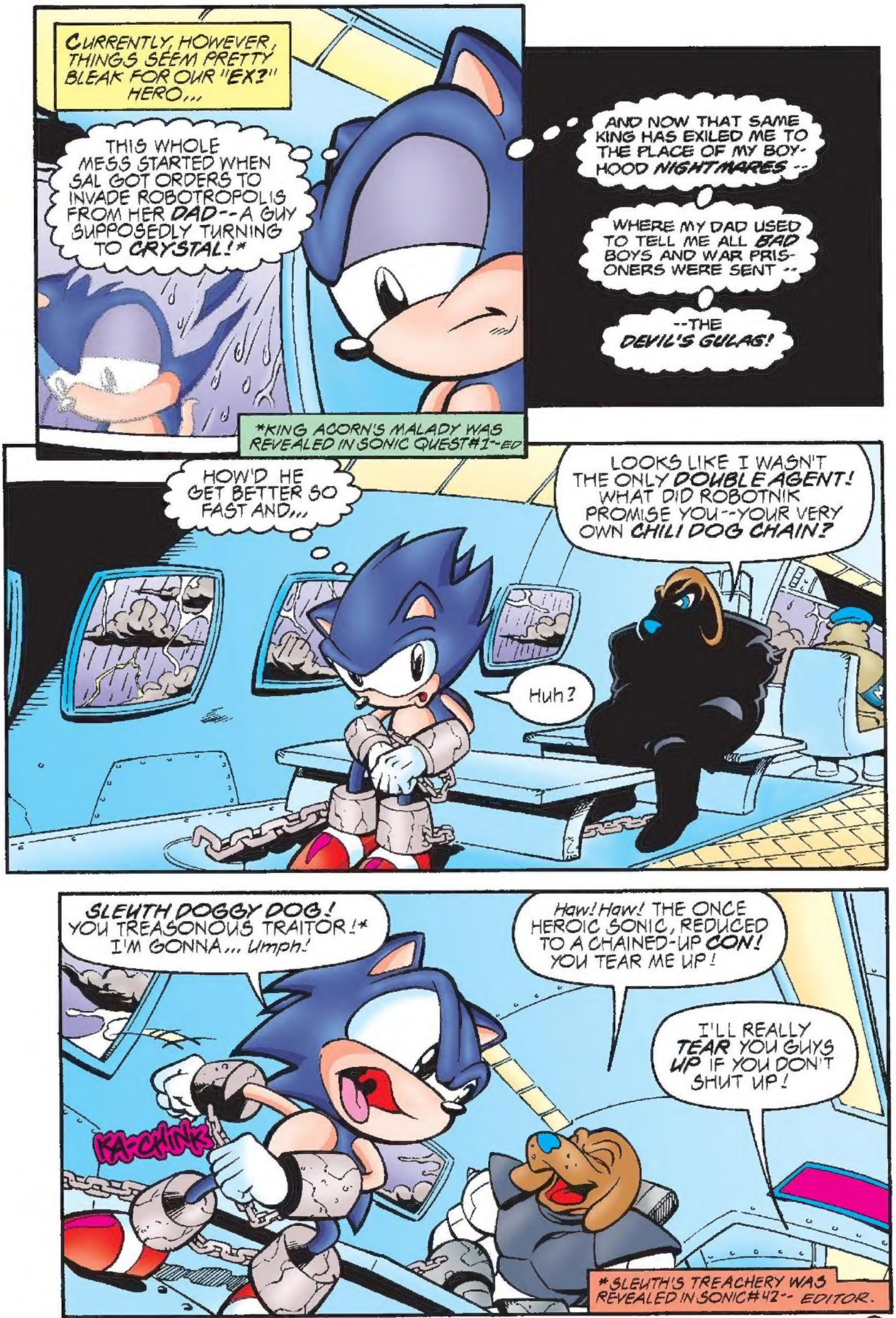
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SALLY'S DEATH!
I SAID YOU'RE GOING TO THE DEVIL'S GULAG. IT'S BEEN DEFUNCT SINCE THE GREAT WAR ENDED!
YOU'RE MAKING A BIG MISTAKE! I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW SHE WAS DEAD UNTIL I RETURNED TO KNOTHOLE!
UNG!
WHAP
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MADE THE MISTAKE, MATE -- AND IT'LL BE YOUR LAST!
NEXT TIME BRING YOUR OWN PLANE! YOU BRUTES BETTER NOT PUT ZEE SCRATCH ON MY BEAUTY!
IS THAT ALL YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT?!
DON'T WORRY, SONIC, WE'LL GET YOU BACK!
THE PLANE AND MY MEN WILL CERTAINLY BE COMING BACK, BUT WITH ANY LUCK...
GRRRRRRRRR
WHY YOU DIRTY--!!
THAT'S ENOUGH! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO ESCORT MY NEPHEW, NOT ELIMINATE HIM!

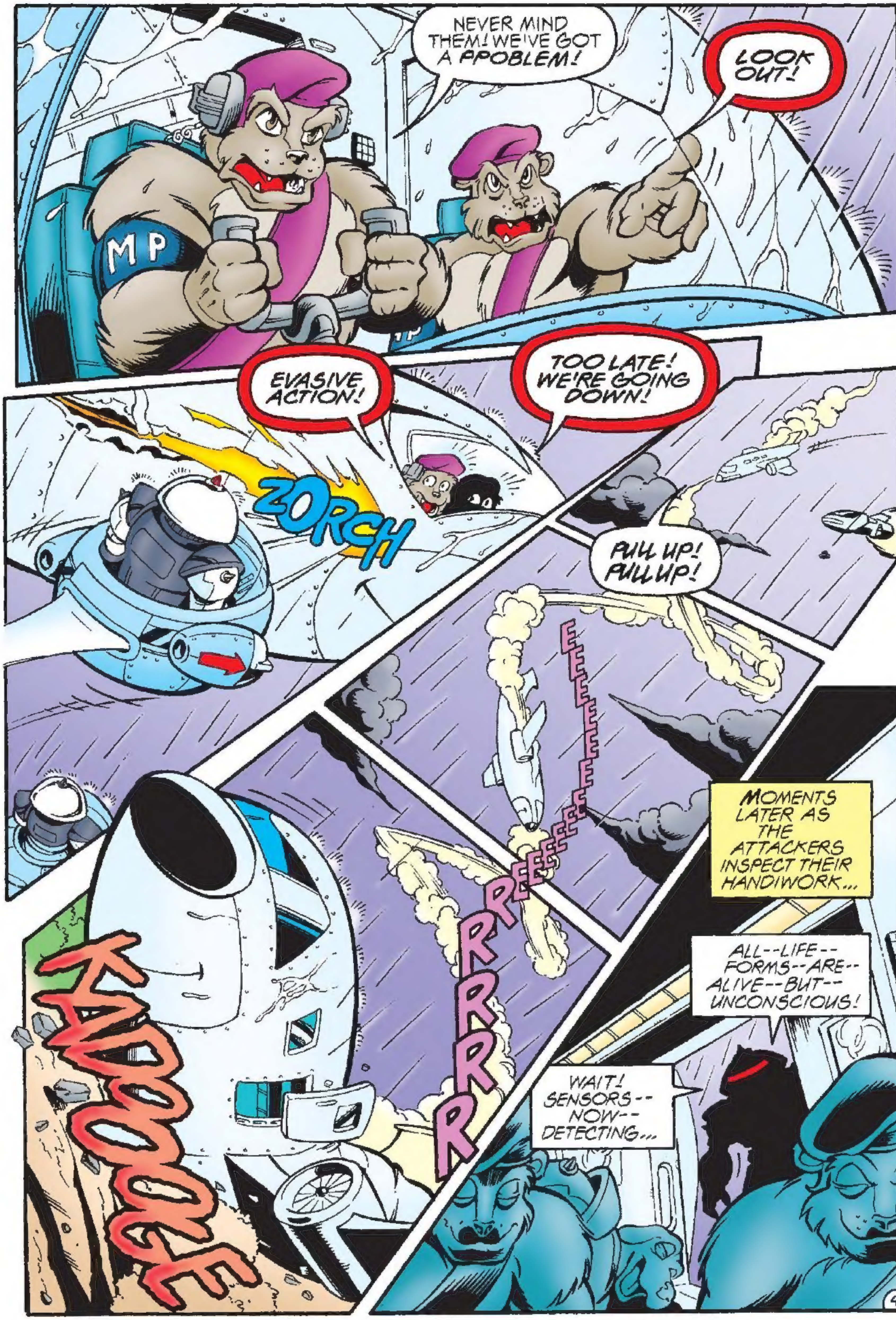

...!WE'LL NEVER SEE SONIC THE HEDGEHOG AGAIN!"
HOW CAN THAT HAVE HAPPENED?!

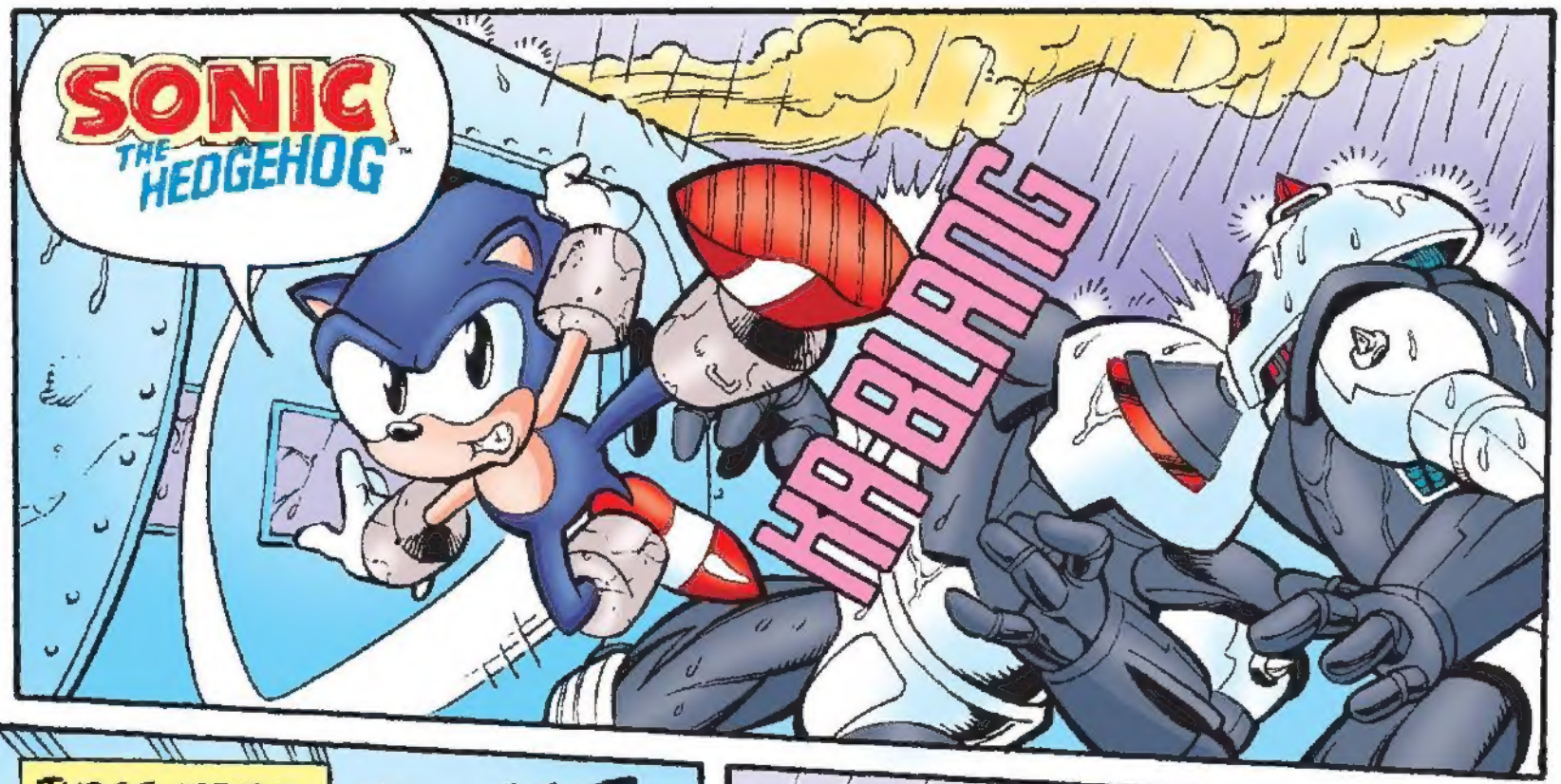

HOW CAN MY BEST FRIEND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AUNT SALLY'S DEATH?!
HE ISN'T!
I TELL YOU, I SAW IT-- WITH ZEE TWO EYES!
I WAS THERE TOO, SUGAH. SONIC IS GUILTY LIKE ANTOINE SAID!


BUT HOW COULD HE DO IT!
HE DIDN'T!
EASY, EVERYONE. SONIC IS AS MUCH IN NEED OF OUR PRAYERS AS POOR SALLY.

BAHAWW! I JUST HEARD! ;Sob: AT LEAST SHE'S AT PEACE! BUT HOW WILL SONIC LIVE WITH WHAT HE'S DONE?!
EEE HEE HEE!
THERE, THERE GIRL! REMEMBER, SOMETIMES THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM...

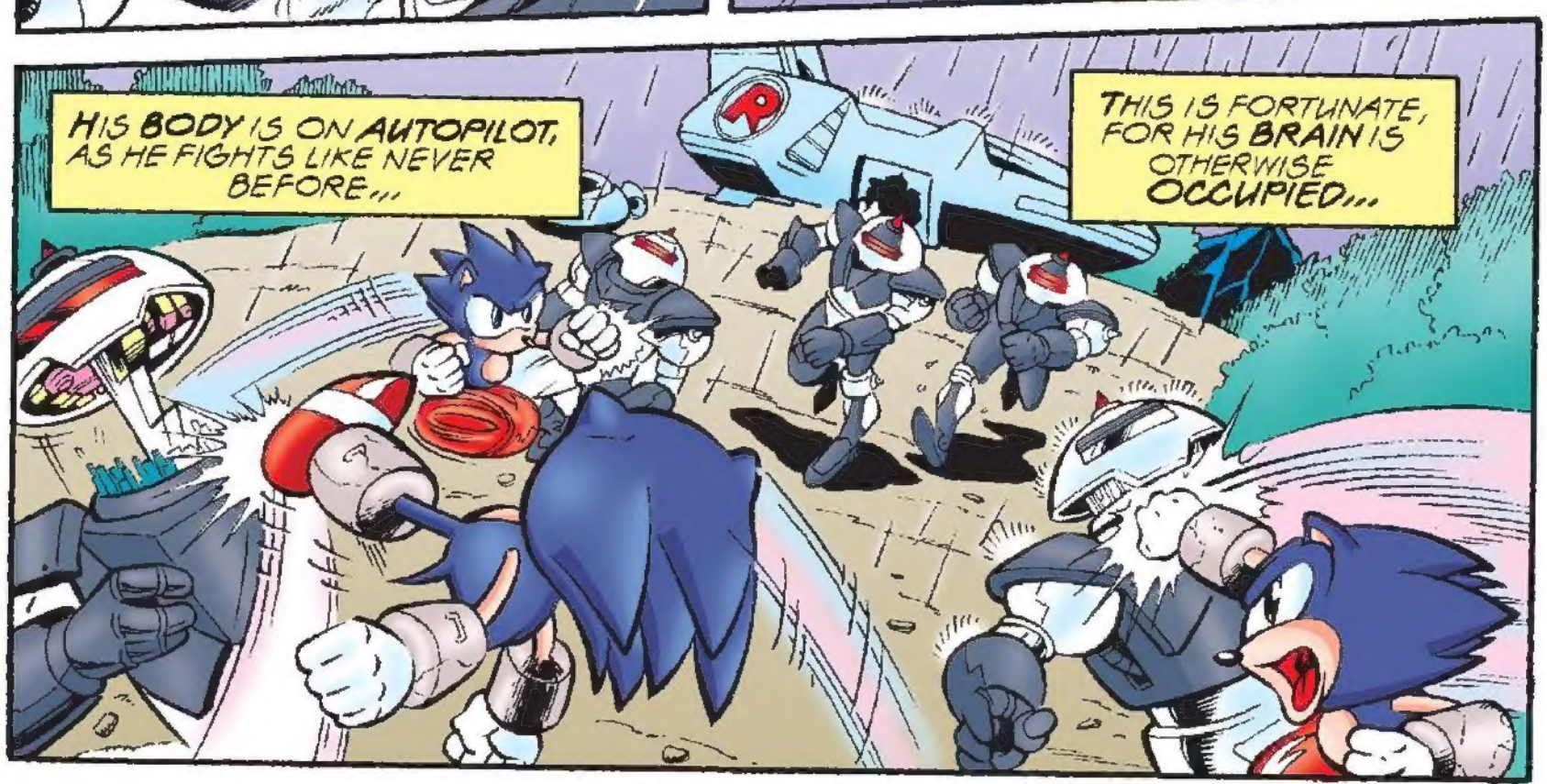

CURRENTLY, HOWEVER, THINGS SEEM PRETTY BLEAK FOR OUR "EX?" HERO...
THIS WHOLE MESS STARTED WHEN SAL GOT ORDERS TO INVADE ROBOTROPOLIS FROM HER DAD--A GUY SUPPOSEDLY TURNING TO CRYSTAL!*
AND NOW THAT SAME KING HAS EXILED ME TO THE PLACE OF MY BOYHOOD NIGHTMARES --
WHERE MY DAD USED TO TELL ME ALL BAD BOYS AND WAR PRISONERS WERE SENT --
--THE DEVIL'S GULAG!
*KING ACORN'S MALADY WAS REVEALED IN SONIC QUEST#1--ED
HOW'D HE GET BETTER SO FAST AND...
LOOKS LIKE I WASN'T THE ONLY DOUBLE AGENT! WHAT DID ROBOTNIK PROMISE YOU--YOUR VERY OWN CHILI DOG CHAIN?
Huh?
SLEUTH DOGGY DOG! YOU TREASONOUS TRAITOR!* I'M GONNA... Umph!
Haw! Haw! THE ONCE HEROIC SONIC, REDUCED TO A CHAINED-UP CON! YOU TEAR ME UP!
I'LL REALLY TEAR YOU GUYS UP IF YOU DON'T SHUT UP!
KA-CHINK
*SLEUTH'S TREACHERY WAS REVEALED IN SONIC#42-- EDITOR.

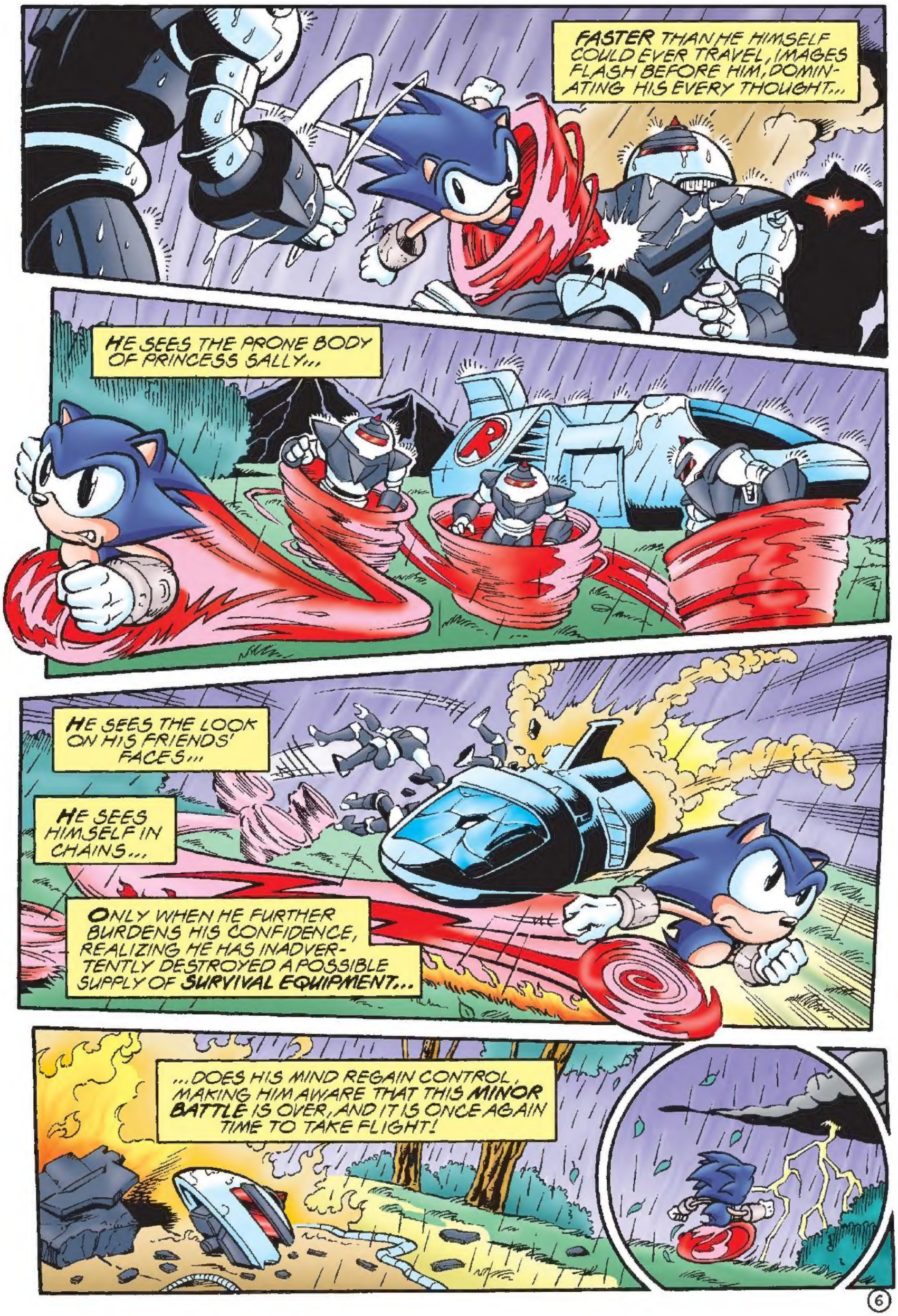

NEVER MIND THEM! WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM!
LOOK OUT!
EVASIVE ACTION!
ZORCH
TOO LATE! WE'RE GOING DOWN!
PULL UP! PULL UP!
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
RRRRPEEEEEEEE
KADOOOGE
MOMENTS LATER AS THE ATTACKERS INSPECT THEIR HANDIWORK...
ALL--LIFE--FORMS--ARE--ALIVE--BUT--UNCONSCIOUS!
WAIT! SENSORS--NOW--DETECTING...
4


SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
KRRLANG

THOSE ARE THE LAST WORDS SONIC UTTERS...
NOT ONE SINGLE JOKE OR WISE-CRACK ESCAPES HIS LIPS...
BLANG CLANG BLONG

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, SONIC IS DEVOID OF HUMOR...
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, SONIC TRULY UNDERSTANDS THE MEANING OF WAR...


HIS BODY IS ON AUTOPILOT, AS HE FIGHTS LIKE NEVER BEFORE...
THIS IS FORTUNATE, FOR HIS BRAIN IS OTHERWISE OCCUPIED...

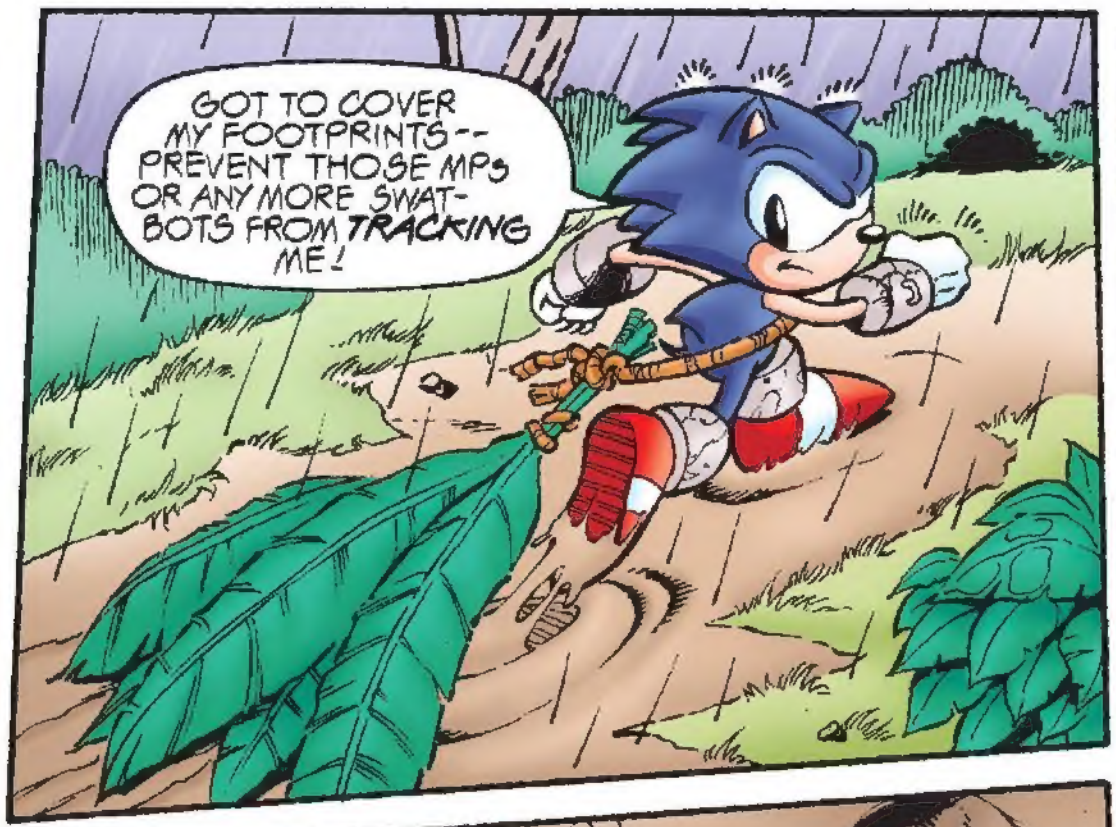

FASTER THAN HE HIMSELF COULD EVER TRAVEL, IMAGES FLASH BEFORE HIM, DOMINATING HIS EVERY THOUGHT...
HE SEES THE PRONE BODY OF PRINCESS SALLY...
HE SEES THE LOOK ON HIS FRIENDS' FACES...
HE SEES HIMSELF IN CHAINS...
ONLY WHEN HE FURTHER BURDENS HIS CONFIDENCE, REALIZING HE HAS INADVERTENTLY DESTROYED A POSSIBLE SUPPLY OF SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT...
...DOES HIS MIND REGAIN CONTROL, MAKING HIM AWARE THAT THIS MINOR BATTLE IS OVER, AND IT IS ONCE AGAIN TIME TO TAKE FLIGHT!

WHILE THE DEPARTING SONIC PONDERS HIS DESTINY, OTHERS ARE ALREADY PREPARING FOR HIS IMMEDIATE FUTURE...
Ahh, YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, FORGIVE MY INTERRUPTION OF YOUR MEDITATIONS, BUT I'M GLAD I'VE CAUGHT YOU ALONE!
YOUR REPORTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME, FAITHFUL DRAGO!
I'M SORRY TO REPORT THAT THE PLANE TRANSPORTING SONIC HAS CRASHED MILES AWAY FROM THE PLANNED DESTINATION...! THE MP'S ARE OKAY AND SNOOP IS STILL IN CUSTODY, BUT--

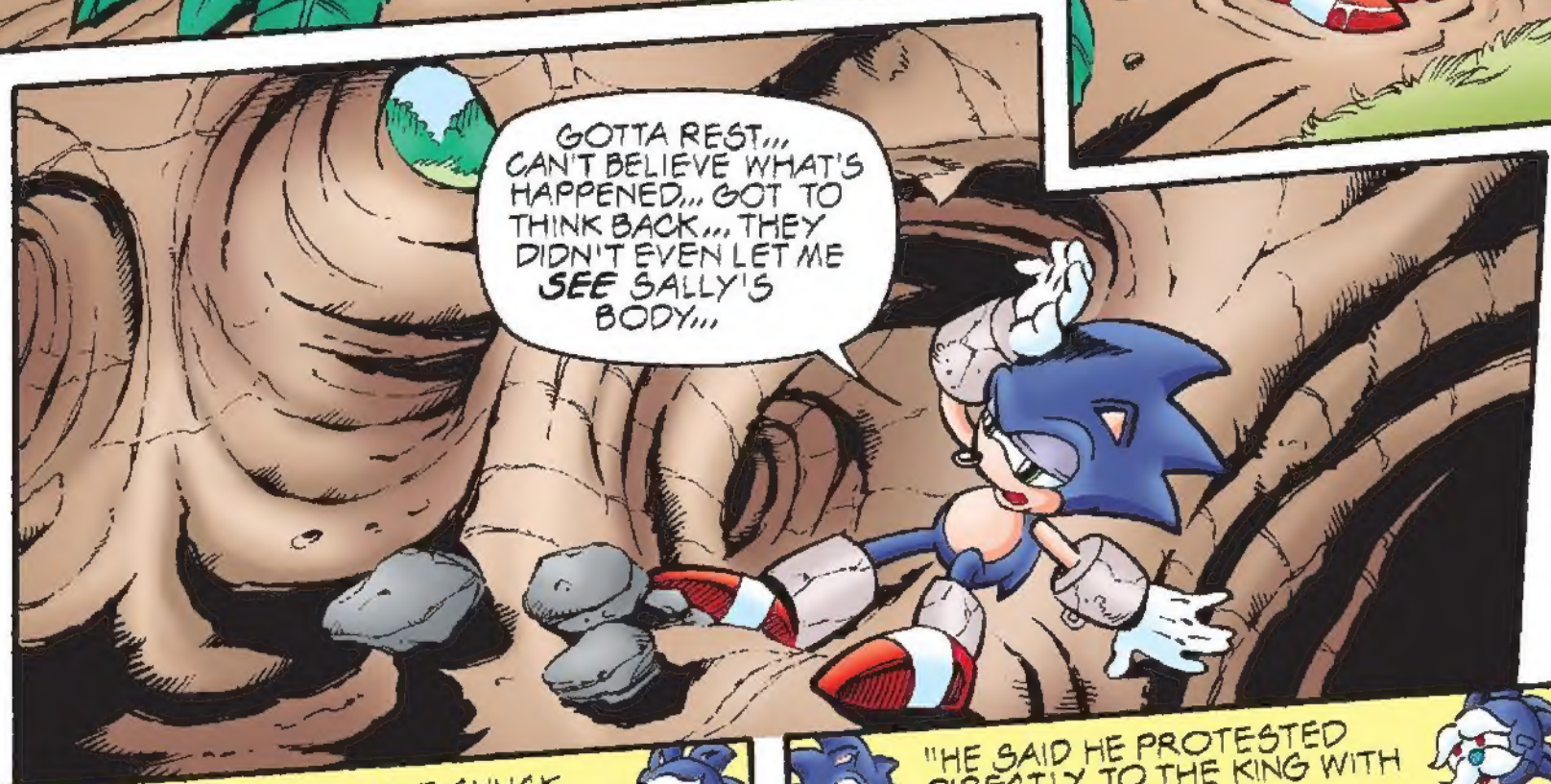
SONIC HAS ESCAPED!
PITY. IT APPEARS HE WILL HAVE TO BE HUNTED DOWN LIKE A DOG... OR BY DOGS!
SEND IN ST. JOHN...

SHORTLY...
YOUR MEN HAVE FAILED ME, GEOFFREY! SONIC THE HEDGEHOG HAS ESCAPED!
...BUT MY MEN ARE THE FINEST-TRAINED SOLDIERS ANYWHERE!

GIVE ME NOT YOUR EXCUSES, MAN! I WON'T HAVE A MURDERER FREE IN MY SOON-TO-BE RESTORED KINGDOM!
FORGIVE ME, YOUR MAJESTY! I'LL ROUST MY MEN IMMEDIATELY! AND I MAKE YOU THIS PLEDGE--
--IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO I WILL RECAPTURE THAT HEDGEHOG!

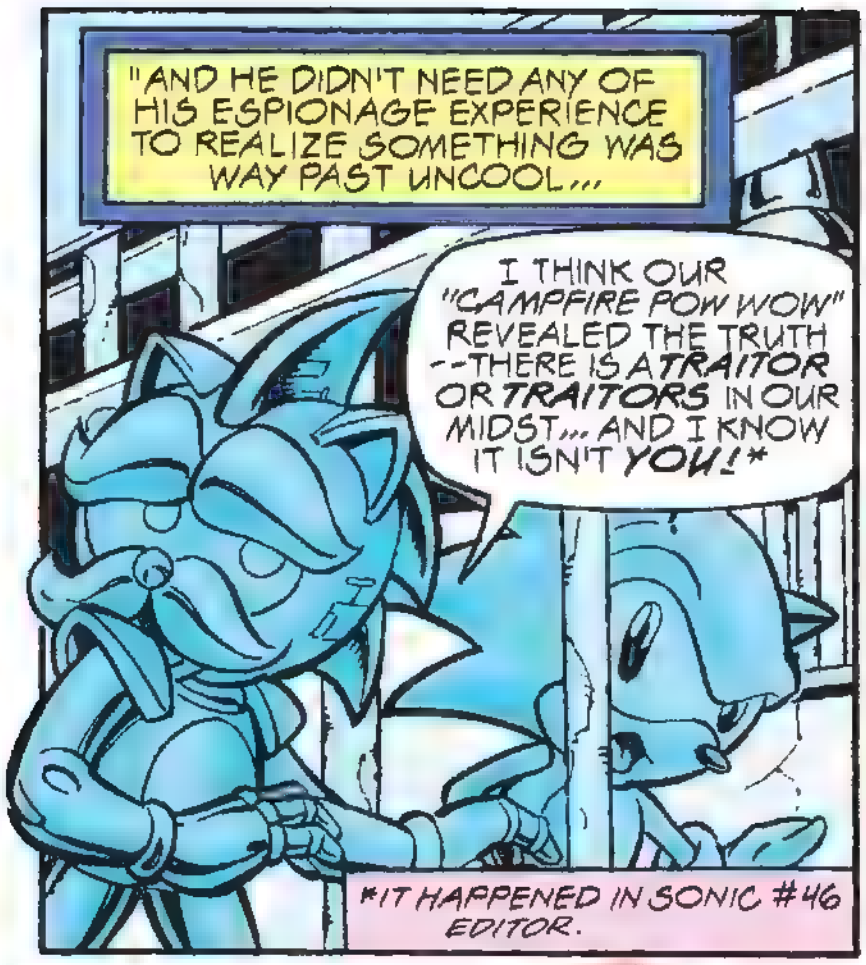

GOT TO COVER MY FOOTPRINTS -- PREVENT THOSE MPs OR ANY MORE SWAT-BOTS FROM TRACKING ME!

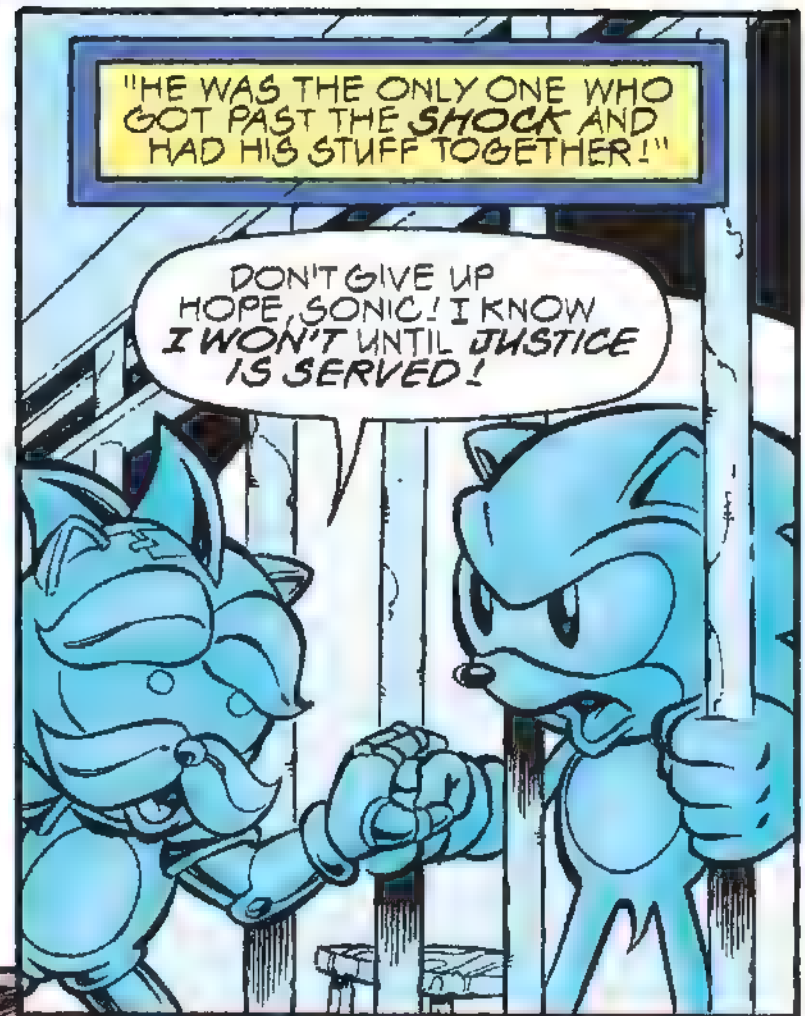
DON'T KNOW IF THOSE SWATBOTS WERE ON PATROL OR A SPECIAL MISSION, BUT THAT WAS ONE TIME I WAS GLAD TO SEE EM!

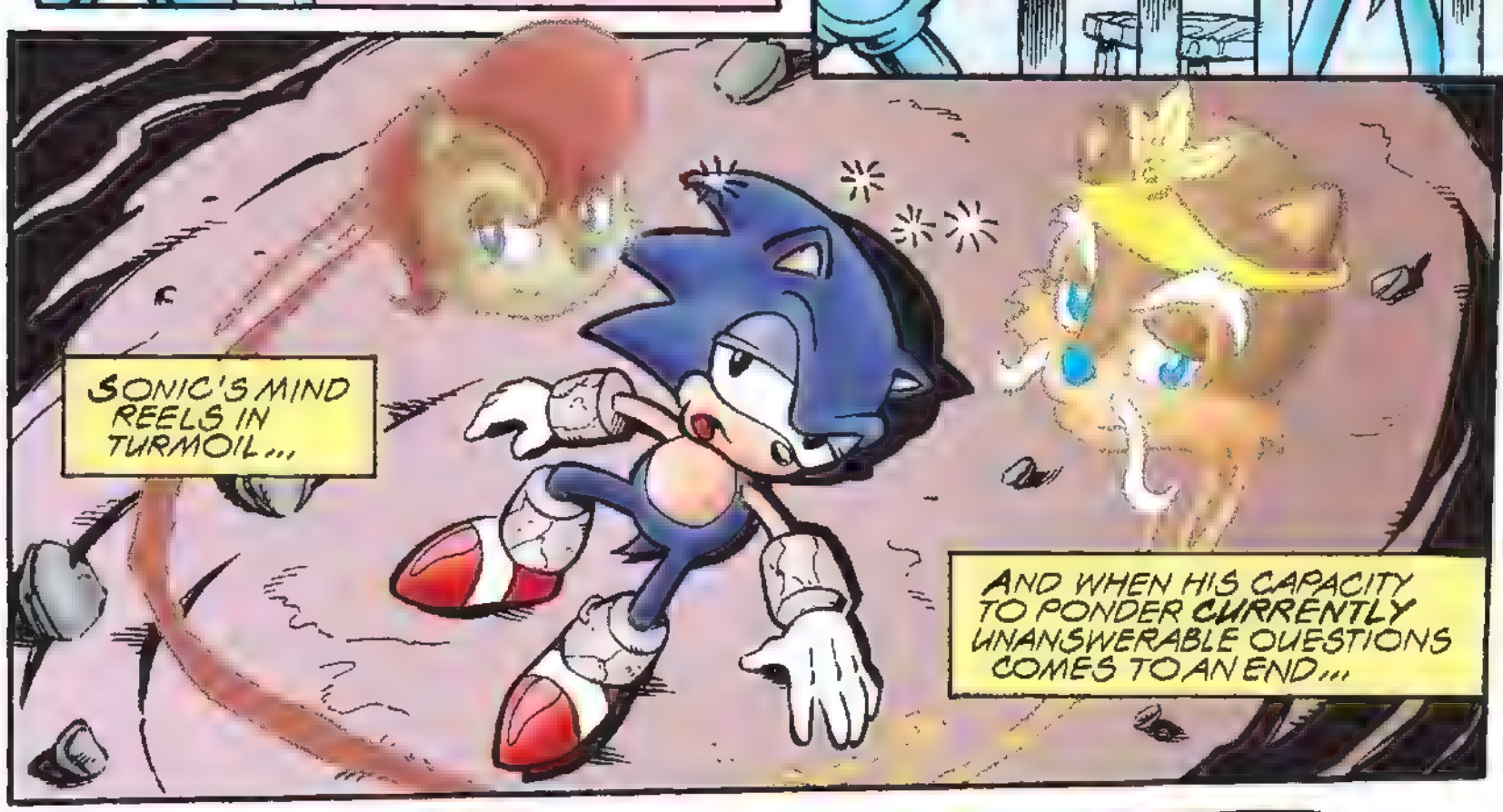

GOTTA REST... CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT'S HAPPENED... GOT TO THINK BACK... THEY DIDN'T EVEN LET ME SEE SALLY'S BODY...

"IN FACT, UNCLE CHUCK RELATED SOMETHING SIM-ILAR WHEN HE VISITED ME...
...AND I'M TELLING YOU, I WANT TO SEE SALLY'S FINAL MEDICAL REPORT!
NO! THE KING HAS ORDERED THOSE RECORDS SEALED, OFF LIMITS TO EVERYONE!

"HE SAID HE PROTESTED DIRECTLY TO THE KING WITH NO LUCK..."
IN ALL DUE RESPECT, IF I'M TO FULLY INVESTIGATE THESE PROCEEDINGS...
THERE WILL BE NO INVESTIGATION AND NO PROCEEDINGS! I WILL PRONOUNCE SENTENCE AT DAWN!


"AND HE DIDN'T NEED ANY OF HIS ESPIONAGE EXPERIENCE TO REALIZE SOMETHING WAS WAY PAST UNCOOL...
I THINK OUR "CAMPFIRE POW WOW" REVEALED THE TRUTH --THERE IS A TRAITOR OR TRAITORS IN OUR MIDST... AND I KNOW IT ISN'T YOU!*
*IT HAPPENED IN SONIC #46 EDITOR.


"HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT PAST THE SHOCK AND HAD HIS STUFF TOGETHER!"
DON'T GIVE UP HOPE, SONIC! I KNOW I WON'T UNTIL JUSTICE IS SERVED!


SONIC'S MIND REELS IN TURMOIL...
AND WHEN HIS CAPACITY TO PONDER CURRENTLY UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS COMES TO AN END...

...ONLY THEN DOES HE FEEL THE TRUE IMPACT OF SALLY'S PASSING...
...ONLY THEN DOES THE STRESS AND GRIEF FORCE HIS BODY TO SUCCUMB TO SLEEP.

BACK AT KNOTHOLE VILLAGE...

WHAT'S UP, ANTOINE?

¡SSH! VERY BE-ZARRE! MOMENTS AGO, DRAGO, AND THEN "LE PEW" GOT ZEE PRIVATE AUDIENCE WITH ZEE KING!

THESE ARE TERRIBLE TIMES, SUGAH!

REALLY?! THEN WHY HAVE WE NOT BEEN GRANTED ZEE SAME PRIVILEGE?

TIPPY TOE TIPPY TOE

AH DON'T KNOW! BUT AT LEAST IT CONFIRMS THAT GEOFFREY IS GENUINE!*

PERHAPS, BUT DRAGO? HE NEVER CLAIMED TO BE IN ZEE KING'S CONFIDENCE!

AND DURING SONIC'S JUDGEMENT, WHY DID HE KEEP ZEE DISTANCE FROM ZEE WOLFPACK?!

*'TWAN BELIEVES GEOFFREY TO BE A SPY. SEE SONIC#46 --EDITOR.P.I.

AH DON'T KNOW! BUT Y'ALL REALIZE THAT WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWING DRAGO, DON'T YA?

OUI! I HAVE SAID THAT I WAS DESTINED TO BE HIS MAJESTY'S NUMBER ONE SOLDIER...

"AND IF ZEE KING CANNOT SEE THE GREAT FOREST FOR ZEE TREES, THEN I WILL DO MY DUTY AS ZEE *RAIDER* OF ZEE *TRAITORS!*"

HELLO, DEAR! THE FUTURE "*DUKE*" OF ROBOTROPOLIS IS HOME!

LEAVE ME OUT OF YOUR *FUTURE!* I'VE DONE *MY PART*--AND THAT'S ENOUGH!

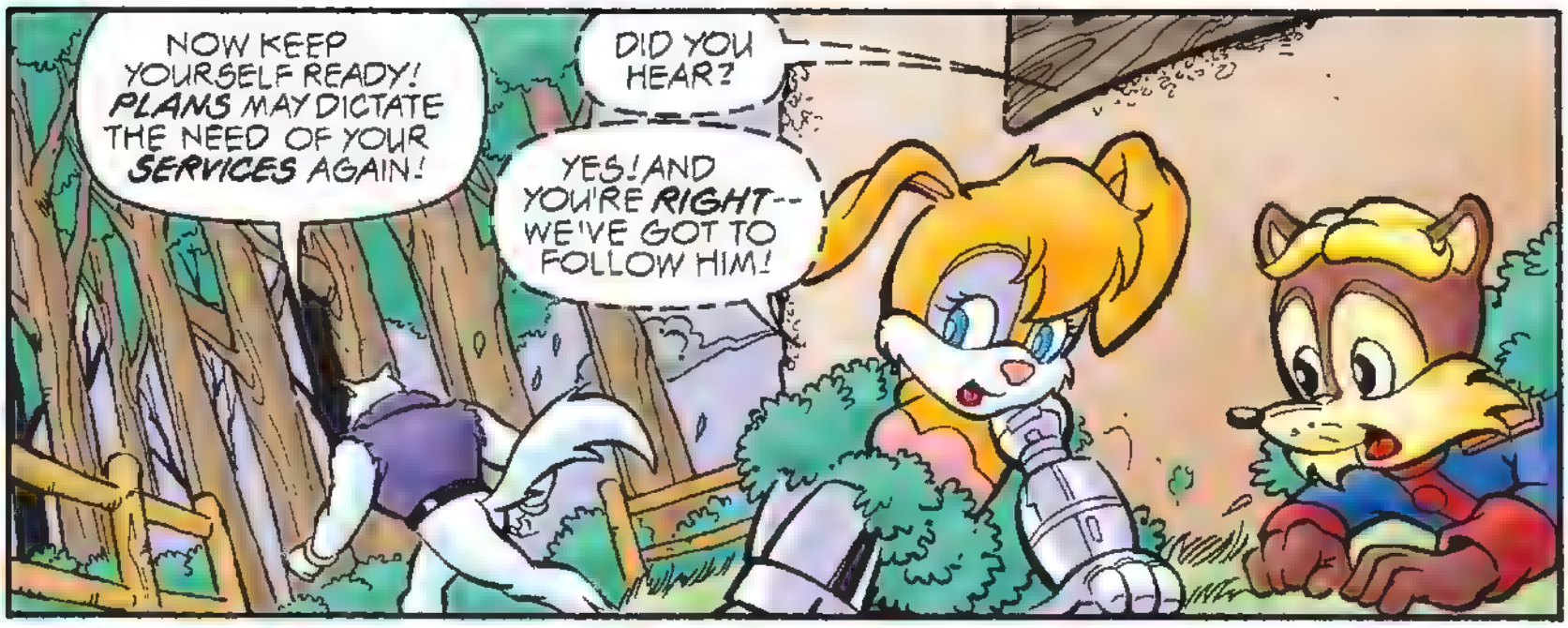
AND IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR *HELP*, MAYBE I'LL MAKE YOU MY FUTURE "*DUCHESS*"!

DON'T TAKE THAT TONE WITH ME! YOU'RE *INTO THIS* UP TO YOUR PRETTY NECK!

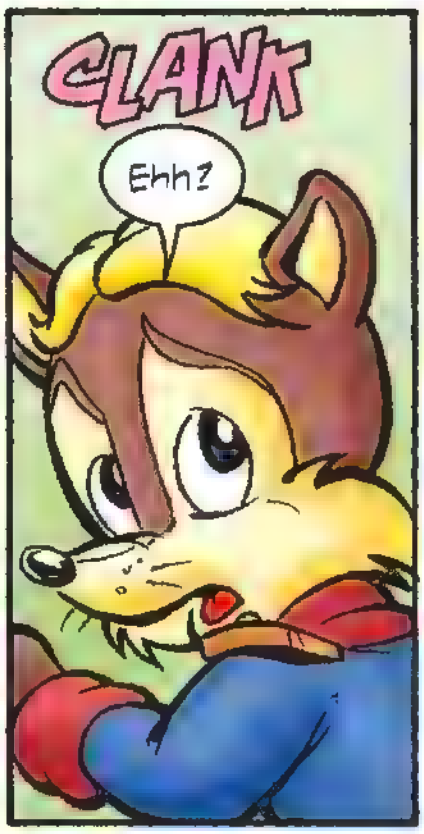
YOU'RE HURTING MY ARM!

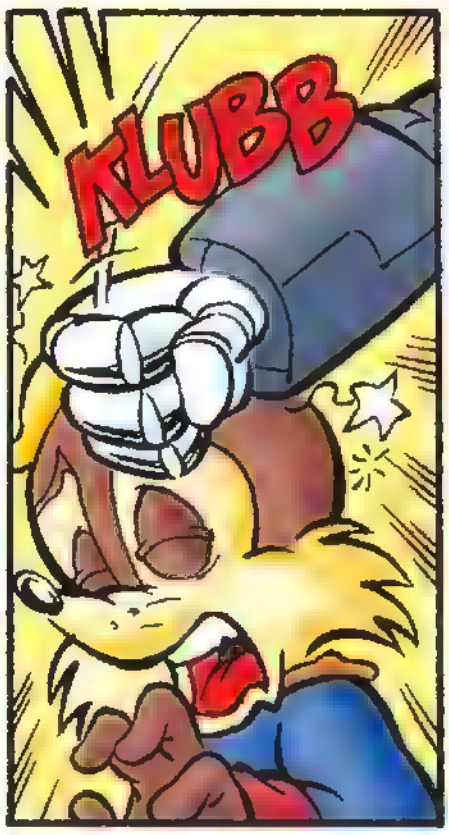
THEN YOU LISTEN HERE! SONIC HAS *ESCAPED* GEOFFREY'S MEN! BUT ST. JOHN *HIMSELF* HAS BEEN ORDERED TO HUNT HIM DOWN!

I'M *SURE* HE'LL FIND HIM, AND WITH ANY LUCK, THEY'LL *ELIMINATE* EACH OTHER!


NOW KEEP YOURSELF READY! PLANS MAY DICTATE THE NEED OF YOUR SERVICES AGAIN!
DID YOU HEAR?
YES! AND YOU'RE RIGHT-- WE'VE GOT TO FOLLOW HIM!

SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS LATER...
WHERE DID HE GO? WE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ZAT FAR BEHIND!


CLANK
Ehh?


KLUBB

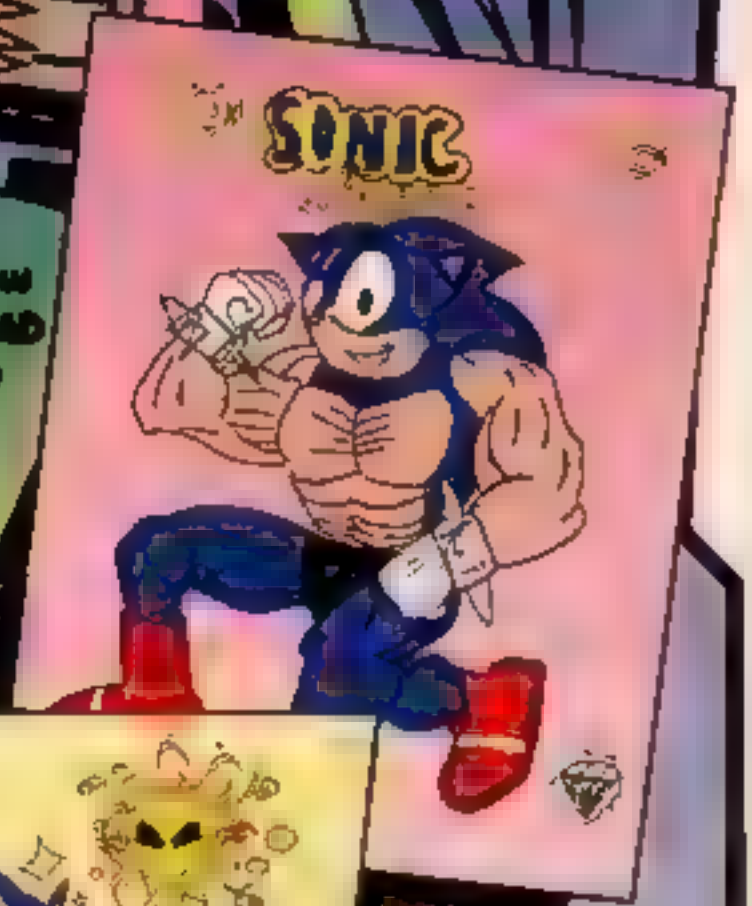
I GUESS ST. JOHN HAS MADE A CORRECT ASSESSMENT OF SALLY'S FREEDOM FIGHTERS-- YOU ARE A BUNCH OF RANK AMATEURS!
ANT... Mmph!

TAKE 'EM AWAY, BOYS! THEY'RE GOING TO BE SPENDING A LITTLE TIME AT OUR PROJECT IN THE LAND DOWNUNDA! HehHehHeh!

FAN ART

SONIC

Tawara Lucas
Apple Valley, CA



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Age 10

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Easton, MD
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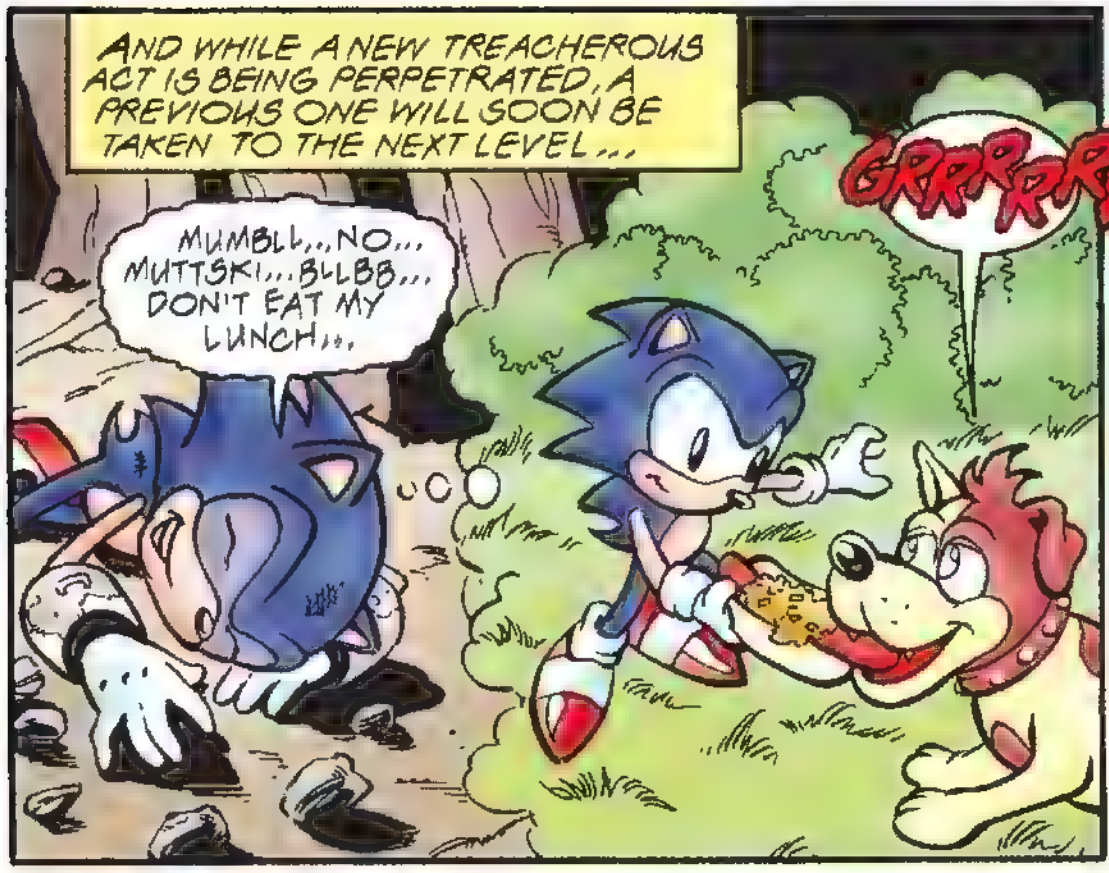


TASMANIAN DEVILS! ONE OF THE FEW MOBIAN RACES THAT NEVER FULLY EVOLVED!

THEY'RE UGLY AND SMELLY BUT THEY MAKE GREAT TRACKERS!

ERRRR! FUTT!

GROWL!

YOU MEN GO THAT WAY! I'LL SEARCH DOWN HERE!

Uhh! THAT MURDERER WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF HIS SPEED ON THIS TERRAIN!

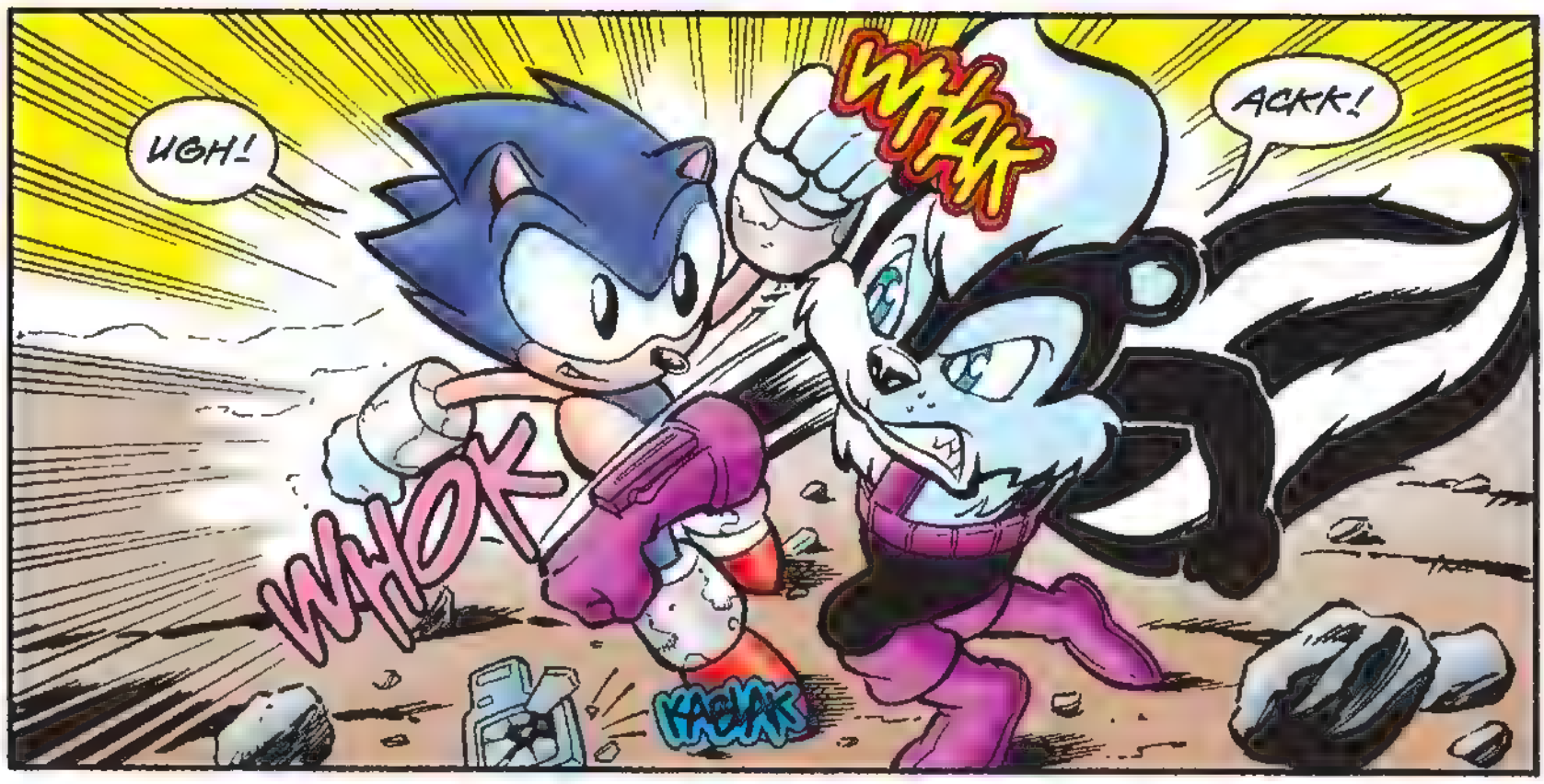
THEY'RE ON TO ME! GOTTA JUICE! BUT--UHH-- THIS ROCKY GROUND'S NOT HELPING!

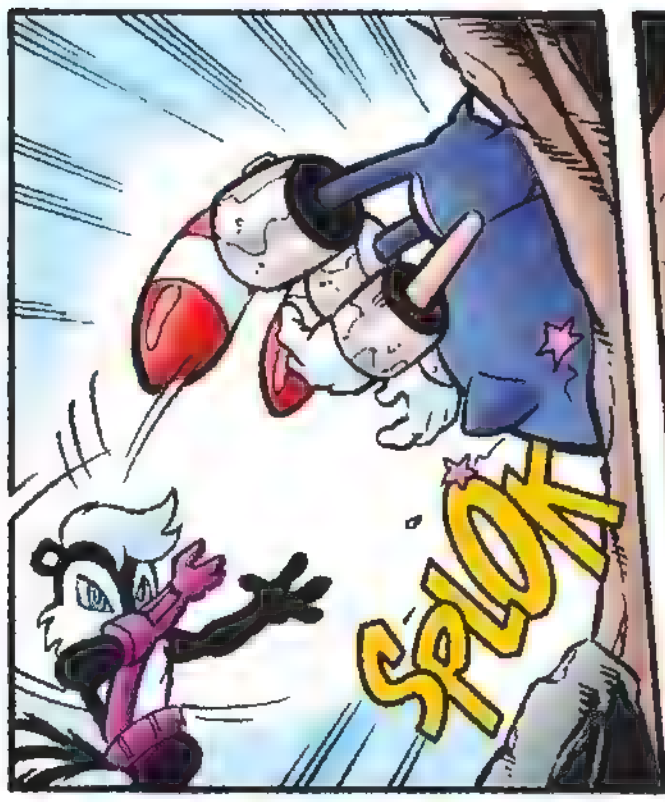
WHAT I CAN'T FIGURE OUT IS HOW THOSE MP'S FOUND ME SO FAST!

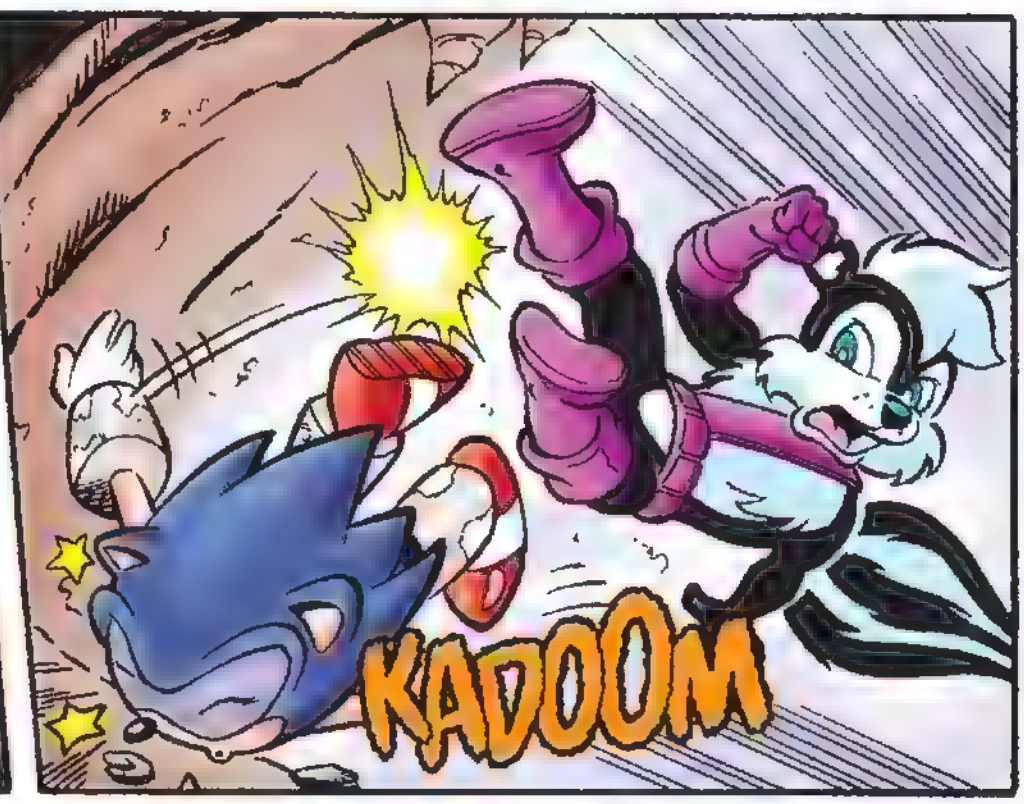
GLAD I TOOK SOME EXTRA MEASURES --THAT BUG I PLACED IN SONIC'S SHACKLE CERTAINLY BECAME HANDY!

IF THOSE REALLY ARE TASMANIAN DEVILS HERE, THEY'LL SOON PICK UP MY SCENT!
WAIT! THAT SMELL! IT'S NOT A TAZ OR EVEN AN MP! THAT MEANS IT'S...

MY TRACKIN' DEVICE IS GOIN' BONKERS! THAT MEANS IT'S...

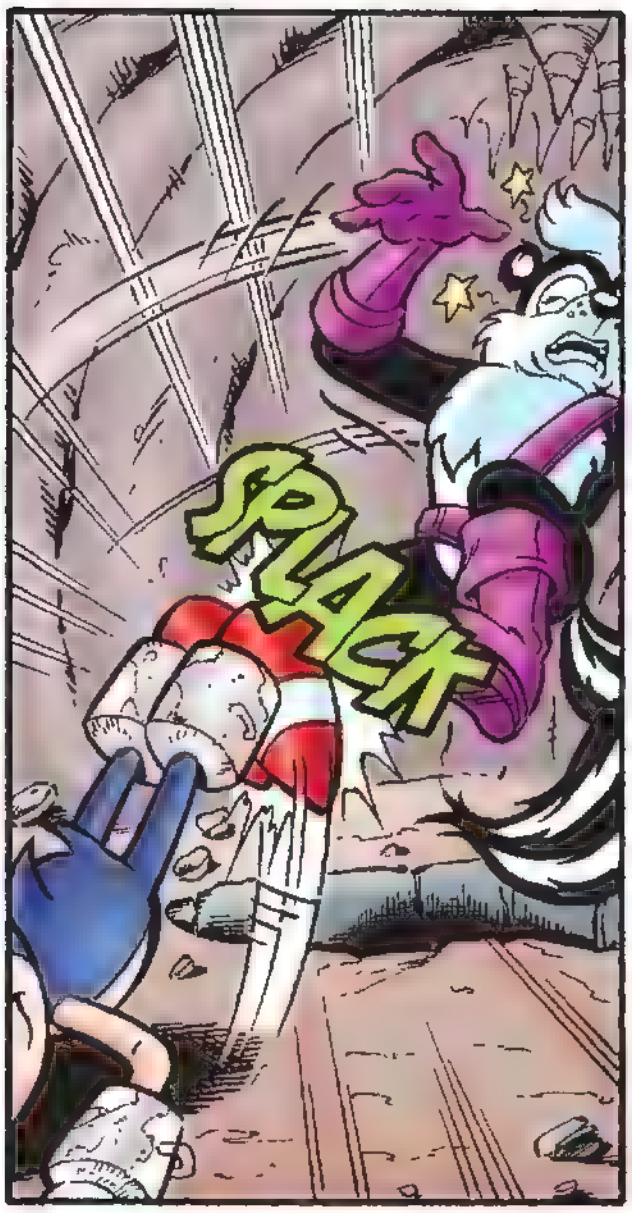

UGH!
WHOK
ACKK!
KACHAK


SPLOK


KADOOM

WHOPP

THUNK


SPLACK

BRAK
BRAK

AS WE PONDER THE FATE OF OUR COMBATANTS, WE TAKE A POSSIBLE **LAST** LOOK INSIDE KNOTHOLE VILLAGE...

SINCE IT HAS BEEN **YEARS** SINCE I LAST DID SO, AND IN LIEU OF ALL THE RECENT EVENTS, I THOUGHT IT HIGH TIME I HELD **COURT!**

FIRST, LET ME SAY, THAT DESPITE THE **UNFORTUNATE FATES** OF MY DAUGHTER AND SONIC, I AM QUITE PLEASED WITH THE HEROISM YOU, MY LOYAL SUBJECTS, HAVE DEMONSTRATED DURING MY **EXILE!**

Robotnik!

IN KNOTHOLE?!

KA-CHUNKT KA-CHUKT KA-CHUKT

KRACKKLE

NOT IN THIS LIFETIME!

SPREE-TOW

hmm... QUAINT.

FLA-KOOM

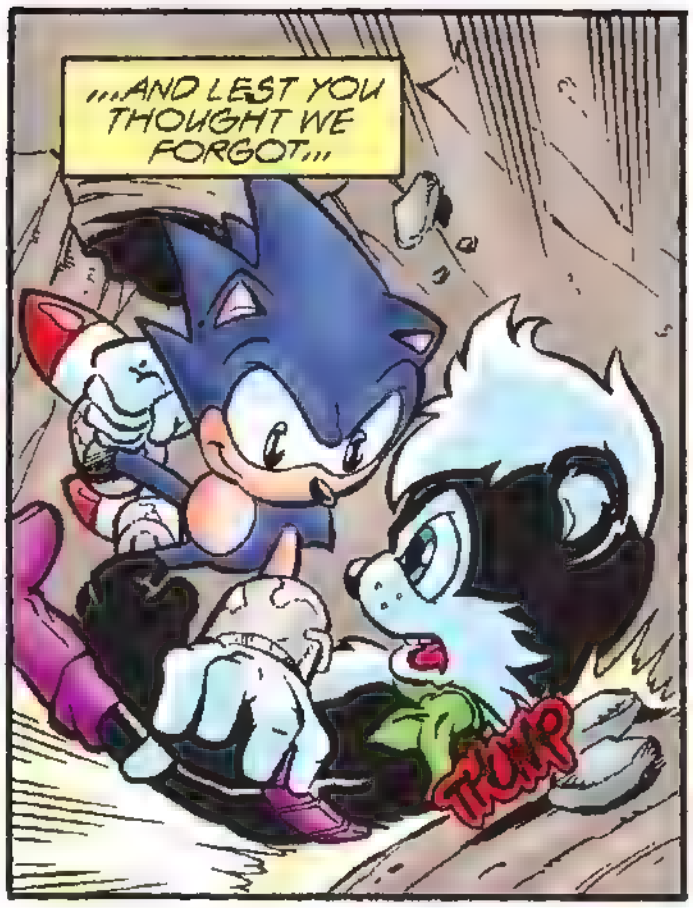
...BUT ULTIMATELY... INFERIOR.

PLEASE... STAY... ON MY ACCOUNT!

WHAT HAVE WE HERE? SIR CHARLES AND MUTTSKI...THIS WOULD EXPLAIN THE DESTRUCTION OF SOME OF MY BEST-LAID PLANS!

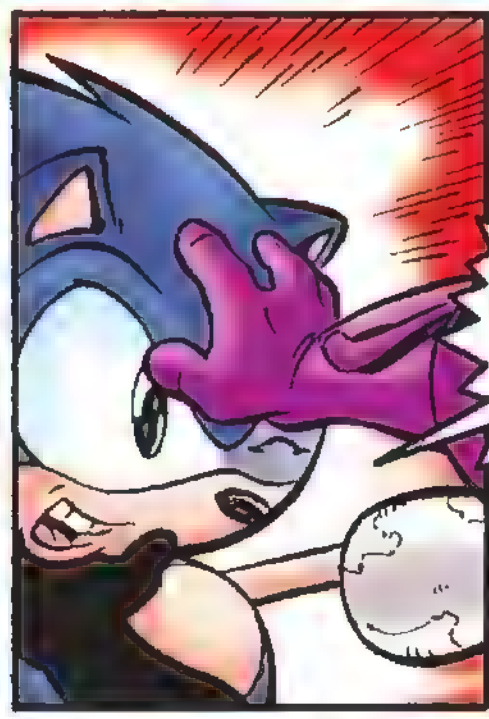
NO MATTER. YOU'RE JUST IN NEED OF AN ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT!

IN FACT, YOU ARE ALL IN NEED OF ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENTS!
THAT IS FINE. AFTER ALL... I DO HAVE THE TIME...
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA


...AND LEST YOU THOUGHT WE FORGOT...
THUMP

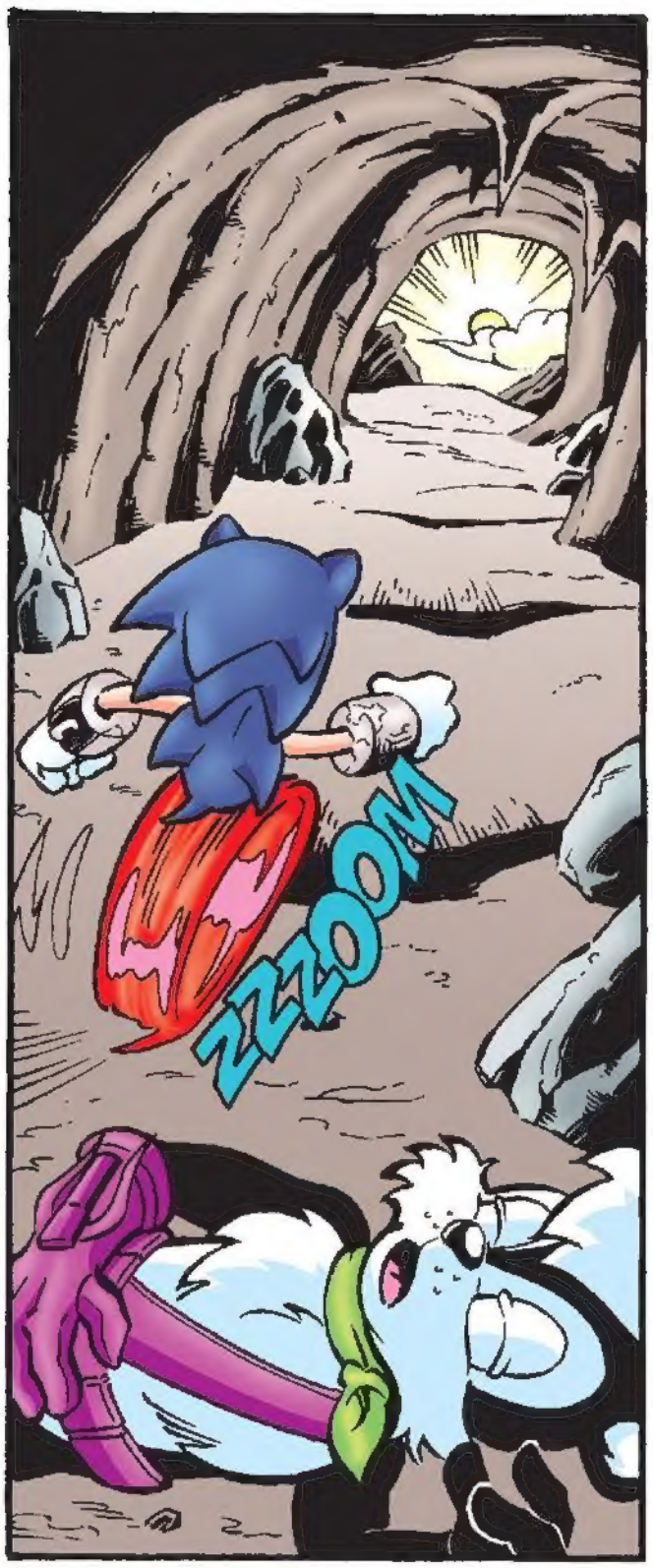
YOU MURDERED HER!
I DIDN'T DO IT!

YOU KILLED THE WOMAN I LOVE!


DON'T YOU SAY THAT! YOU ONLY LOVE YOURSELF! I LOVED HER!

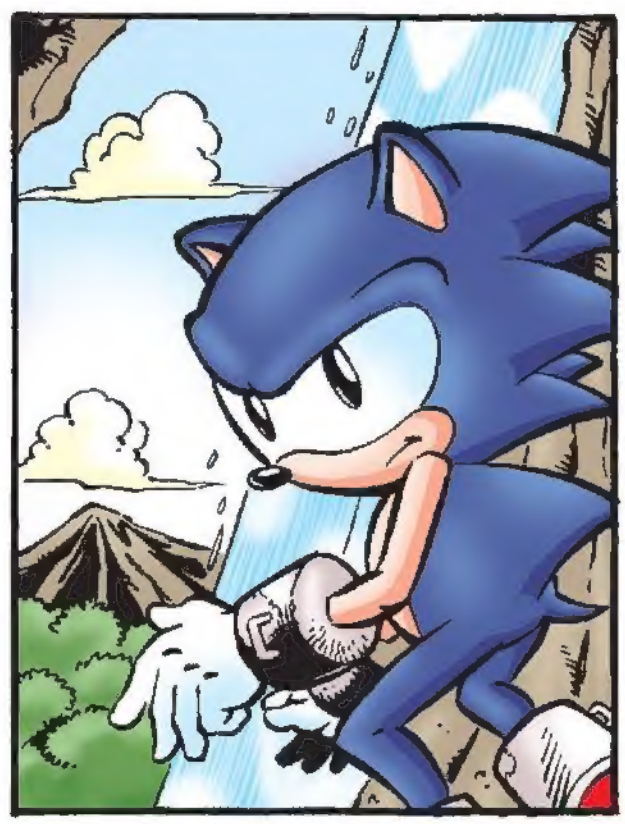
BRACK

KADACK


ZZZOOM

ARGH! NO!

THERE'S-- NO--WAY-- OUT!



TO BE CONTINUED...
SONIC THE FUGITIVE™
Brought to you with pride by
script KENT TAYLOR & KEN PENDERS penciler MANNY GALAN
inker PAM EKLUND letterer JEFF POWELL colorist KARL BOLLERS
editor J. FREDDY GABRIE mng. editor VICTOR GORELICK
editor-in-chief RICHARD GOLDWATER

SONIC-GRAMS

J. Freddy Gabrio
Editor

THIS JUST IN!

SONIC #49
On sale MAY 1997!

SONIC & KNUCKLES BATTLE ROYAL #1
On sale MAY 1997!

KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA #4
On sale MAY 1997!

ROBOTNIK IN KNOTHOLE?!! SAY IT ISN'T SO, JOE.

Well it is! What will happen next is anybody's guess! All we can tell you about the continuation to "END GAME" next issue is that its called, "Escape To The Floating Island!" Written by Mike Gallagher and Ken Penders with art chores by newcomer Sam Maxwell and Pam Ekland! On sale early May 1997!

Also in three weeks, the upcoming **48-page special** that takes place **before the events** in last month's issue that everyone is talking about! **"KnucklesQuest"** is over, but the saga of the **Sword of Acorns** is not. **Mammoth Mogul and his Fearsome Foursome** want it for their own purposes. Devising a plan that will keep **Knuckles and The Chaotix** from delivering the sword to **Princess Sally and The Freedom Fighters**, isn't that much of a problem when you know what their weaknesses are. Talk about a misunderstanding. It is a tale we could only call **"SONIC VS. KNUCKLES: BATTLE ROYAL!!!"** Also on sale in **early May 1997!**

Because you, the fans, have demanded it: **KNUCKLES: THE DARK LEGION three-issue mini-series** has **graduated to ongoing status!** Beginning with **issue #4, KNUCKLES THE ECHIDNA will be on sale late May '97!** Continuing in the tradition of the first three issues, every three-issue story-arc will have a **triple-combo cover collection.** More about this next month! ...

Ken Penders

P.S.: As I mentioned last issue, due to the **overwhelming** amount of e-mail from Sonic fans all over the **World Wide Web**, Sonic now has an **e-mail address** devoted solely to **"Notes From The Net!"** It is **SonicNotes@aol.com**; please make a 'note' of it. **Thanks!**

SEND LETTERS TO:
SONIC-GRAMS #48
C/O ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.
P.O. BOX 419
MAMARONECK, NY 10543-0419
e-mail address: SonicNotes@ aol.com

Because of limited space, the editors cannot guarantee that all correspondence will be published and reserve the right to edit messages as they see fit.

Dear Sonic,

I just finished reading issue #42 and let me tell you Mawhinney's art was stunning and Taylor's script, outstanding! Just one more thing: How did the Floating Island stay afloat if Knuckles lent the chaos emerald to Sonic? KnucklesQuest promises to be interesting. Sonic and Tails are my favorite duo, even though Tails is the biggest blabbermouth on Mobius. SONIC RULES!!!

Christian Ibrahim
N.S.W., Australia

Hey, what's up, gang? It's me, Tails. Shhhh. I'm in hiding since Robotnik took over the village. What a bummer, huh? Since Sonic's not here, I'm doing letters this month. Bet'cha I do a better job than Antoine did last month. Anyway, I don't think I'm a blabbermouth, just full of information, that's all. Knuckles had a spare emerald that he got in the SUPER SONIC VS. HYPER KNUCKLES Special #1. That's what he brought with him, not the original that was still keeping the island afloat.

Dear Sonic-Grams,

I DON'T WANT KNUCKLES AND SALLY TO GET TOGETHER!!! Look, sure, I admit she's pretty, but she's already got four guys drooling over her and I DON'T LIKE IT!!! Don't get me wrong, Knuckles is a wonderful character in his own right, just not with Sally when everyone knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that Sonic is Sally's guy, period! What do I have to do to convince you guys, hold my breath till I turn bluer than Sonic?

Susan Hatfield
Dothan, AL

Hey, Susan! I was kind of afraid that "Aunt" Sally liked Knuckles more than Sonic. But now with everything that's going on, it doesn't seem to matter anymore—I just want things to be the way they were— I mean-- without Robotnik, of course.

Dear Letter Quest,

I thought SONIC QUEST #1 was "Da Bomb!" It's great! Now I know the next two books are going to be good. I've been a longtime subscriber of SONIC THE HEDGEHOG since I was twelve. I'm fifteen years old now and I'm in the 10th grade. I like playing Sega Genesis and I LOVE JAPANESE ANIME! I read about a new Japanese Sonic cartoon in *Game Pro Magazine*. It said that it could be rented right now. I'm still looking all over the city for it. Well, I've got to go. Keep up the good work!

Danielle Hardy
Detroit, MI

I'm glad you liked SONICQUEST, Danielle. It was a good learning experience for me to tag along with Sonic and learn on the job from the man himself. I still believe in him. I know that there's no way he could've hurt Sally. I agree with Uncle Chuck— I think Sonic is innocent. But how do I prove that with Buttnik breathing down my neck. I wonder if there's a connection between the two. I've got to think about this for a while...

Hey Sonic,

I learned that another character from the animated series is coming to the comic book, Lupe and her Wolf Pack. After the experience in SONIC #39, MECHA MADNESS Special #1 and SONIC #40, I hope you learned an important lesson: "Be careful what you wish for, you might just get it!"

I have a question concerning Antoine: Will he still be your friend even after SONIC #40 or will he turn on you like Sleuth Dawggy Dawg did in #42? Who knows, he might end up serving Enerjak. Speaking of which, when is Enerjak making an appearance again. See you in END GAME!

Danny Wheeler
jawheeler@juno.com

Sonic didn't speak to Antoine for a while after that except when it came to business. After Antoine stood up for Sonic against Geoffrey St. John in SONIC #46, I thought they might be able to bury the hatchet— that is, until Antoine saw Sonic drop Sally. Hey, where is Antoine anyway? Come to think of it, I don't see Bunnie, either. Gotta go. See you next month.